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Geschichte der Modernen Gemeindebetriebe in Italien. By GISELA MICHELS-LINDNER. Vol. 130, Part II. (Leipzig: Duncker and Humblot, 1909.)

A wide and yet intensive survey of municipal undertakings in the principal countries of the world will be supplied by a series now being published by the *Verein für Socialpolitik*. Volumes 128 and 129 of its *Schriften* are devoted to several of the larger German cities. Austria, Switzerland, Belgium and Australia are dealt with in later issues. The novelty of some of the undertakings described in the volume dealing with Italy should make it of special interest to American readers. Thus municipal bakeries receive a large share of attention. In many instances they were established in pellagra districts with the hope that by reducing the price of wheat bread the population might be induced to give up the consumption of disease-breeding polenta. According to Manzini the death rate from this cause has been reduced by 38 per cent in ten communes which established municipal bakeries. Experiments are also being made with school kitchens, apothecary shops, wine cellars, interurban automobile services, advertising undertakings, laboratories for the preparation and distribution of various serums, etc. The extent to which the movement has gone in connection with large undertakings may be indicated by the fact that Italy now possesses 227 municipal slaughter houses, 17 municipal ice plants, 179 municipal water works, 139 municipal burial establishments, 49 electric street lighting plants, and 4 municipally owned but privately operated street railways.

Madame Michels-Lindner's treatment of her subject leaves little to be desired. The historical development of modern municipal enterprise in Italy is fully described. The legal forms which control in this field are discussed, and much statistical material dealing with costs, prices, wages, and profits, is discussed. The point of view is strongly and frankly favorable to municipalization, but this does not prevent the recognition of various mistakes and failures which have occurred in the course of the experimentation undertaken by Italian cities.

R. C. B.